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Food and Home Notes

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In This Issue:

1. Iron in the Diet
2. In The Beginning
3. — There was Wool
4. Marketing Service

If you're preparing a frozen turkey — thaw it in the refrigerator or in a watertight bag in cold water. Allow 1 to 2 days in the refrigerator for thawing the whole turkey or the turkey breast- 3 to 9 hours for the turkey leg, or 12 to 18 hours for the boneless roast.

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Did you know that it takes seven 16 ounce cans of kidney beans to equal one No. 10 can? If you're making chili the large can is usually more economical too, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture home economists.

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Before measuring soy flour you should stir it — it tends to pack in the container. After stirring, spoon the flour lightly into a measuring cup and level with a spatula.

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Remember — soy flour cannot completely replace all-purpose flour because it does not contain gluten.

USDA RESEARCH

— THE CHEMICAL FORM OF IRON

Foods rich in iron? But — they may be of little benefit if the iron is not present in the proper chemical form, according to studies reported by a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

"The iron in egg yolk is not readily available to the body, in contrast to the iron in whole wheat, in experiments with rats, according to Dr. Eugene R. Morris, of the Agricultural Research Service. However, related experiments show that orange juice, and presumably other sources of vitamin C, can increase the availability of iron in egg yolk to about the same high level as that of whole wheat. On the other hand, vitamin C failed to further increase the already high availability of iron in the wheat.

The chemical measuring stick used in this research gave egg yolk -- raw or cooked -- a score of 32, as compared with 100 for foods in which iron is readily available...hard and soft wheats scored 90 (in tests with rats)... However, whole wheat scored only 75 (chemical changes during baking may account for the difference).

HAND WOVEN WOOLENS

Sharleen Bergum of Brookings, S.D. has teamed up with Mother Nature to produce woolen items made from "scratch". It all began with her "pioneer spirit kindled by her 4-H experiences. Now she demonstrates her art — spinning, dyeing and weaving — with the expertise of a professional.

It all starts with a sheep fleece. After she cards, combs and spins the wool into yarn, she washes and colors it with her own dyes. When she finishes — the handfuls of wool have become rich, earth-toned wall hangings and afghans.

Old fashioned methods are used and all the materials come from the South Dakota outdoors. Rhubarb roots, carrot tops, sunflowers, chokecherries, pine cones, willow and apple trees are all used to make dyes for her creations. She boils down her plants right at home — on top of the kitchen range where she prepares the meals for her husband and two children.

"The color changes with each batch" she explains. "In the spring there's more water in the plants so the dye is a lighter shade. Then, after a hot, dry summer like we had last year, the dye will be much more intense." There are other variables in the dyeing process that also effects the color, she adds.

Samples of each batch of dyes are indexed on file cards and bound together for future reference. She includes information on the dye process she uses as well as the type of plants and other pertinent information.

The wool Sharleen uses comes from Corriedale sheep on her father's farm — she combs and cards it, and then rolls it into tube-shaped tuffs called "rolags".

GRANDMA'S WAY



Sharon Bergum at her spinning wheel.

Once the yarn is spun and dyed, she moves on to her loom to finish weaving her creation. She's interested in depicting nature and weaves in natural elements such as horse hair, tree branches and bone fragments. The wool, plant-based dyes and the extra materials that are added to her work all come from the prairies. The design and earth-tone colors reflect the aesthetic qualities of our heritage.

by LeAnn Birch, Agriculture Information, South Dakota State University

RESEARCH AND PROMOTION — ON AGRICULTURE

If you've heard about the Cotton Board, Potato Board, or the National Wheat Institute and thought of them as government agencies — you're wrong. But — they are examples of organizational units that coordinate research and promotion (R&P) programs on behalf of the farmers in our country. And — they are given administrative supervision by the government.

Many of the fruits, vegetables and related speciality crops like nuts and dates — and even milk — are under Federal market order programs and have research and promotional projects. These programs are responsible to the farmers who voted them into being by referendum, and their projects are given administrative supervision by the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Their research involves many things — from developing more nutritious varieties of wheat, improved lines of sheep, flame-retardance in cotton, to new ways to use processed products and new merchandizing methods.

Consumers receive this information on agricultural products including nutrition education — via television, radio and the press. Supermarket handouts, posters and some signs in stores often come from these R&P groups whose members are working farmers. A fact sheet on R&P For Farm Products (AMS - 561) is available from : Information Division -AMS, U.S. Department of Agriculture - Room 1078-S, Washington D.C. 20250. — (Stu Sutherland, AMS)

NOTE: Additional information for the MEDIA and photographs (when applicable) may be obtained from: Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Room 535-A, Office of Communication/Press Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or telephone 202-447-5898.
